

Old Copper Complex (6,000 – 3,000 BP) of the Western Great Lakes is the best known of several ancient North American cultures who used cold-worked copper for weaponry and tools. They also and traded copper goods for other exotic materials. (Pleger 2000; Wikipedia 2019)

Veins and nuggets of 99% pure copper were found in quarries, mines chipped into the rock, and gravel beds around Lake Superior. (Gibbon 1998)



Rob Lavinsky, iRocks.com

Nugget of native copper from the glacial drifts of Michigan
12.1 oz. 8.5 x 5.8 x 3.1 cm.

Copper tools from the Old Copper Complex



By about 3,000 years ago, copper was used mostly for jewelry and other status-related items rather than for tools, possibly indicating that the development of more hierarchical cultures in the area led to an increase in demand for prestige items. (Pleger 2000)

Some archaeologists propose that [Hopewellian](#) groups cast metal, but this conclusion is not widely accepted. (Neiburger 1987)

References

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